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John Lewis

Martin Luther King Jr. once said, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” – (The Quotations page, 1) Dubbed, ‘one of the most courageous persons the Civil Rights Movement ever produced’, John R. Lewis decided at a young age that he would be an instrument of change in the American Society. The words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. resonated with John Lewis, fueling his desire to become an activist. Compelled by observing the social prejudice around him, he did not allow his humble beginnings to deter him from his ambitious dream of becoming a world changer. (US House of Representatives, 1)

Throughout his life, Lewis has made some outstanding contributions in efforts to eradicate injustice. While in college, he organized ‘sit-in demonstrations at segregated lunch counters.’ He and his colleagues were humiliated, beleaguered, abused and eventually imprisoned; but none the less, their efforts remained relentless in the struggle for equality. In the 1960’s he became a freedom rider, opposing the discrimination against Black people on interstate buses. During these rides John Lewis jeopardized his safety by sitting in seats reserved for white clients. He was so passionate in his pursuit to help end segregation that he was involved in audacious demonstrations; despite his awareness that the repercussions of his actions could endanger his ability to graduate from American Baptist

Theological Seminary. (Academy Of Achievement, 1), (The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute, 1)

John Lewis had an integral part in the formation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. As president, he was responsible for the arrangement of a campaign called 'Mississippi Freedom Summer' which sought to implement voting rights for Blacks in the South. (Academy Of Achievement, 1)

"Those who love peace must learn to organize as effectively as those who love war." - Martin Luther King Jr. This powerful quote is a very realistic one; fighting for peace does not require physical blows but it is essential that it leaves an impact. In order to leave an impact, we must devise strategies that are so elaborate that they successfully counteract the matter we are against (Good Reads, 1).

I would consider myself a peacemaker in my community. I detest the very thought of violence and disharmony, therefore, I strive to resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner. When I observe tension between two individuals, I usually get feedback from both sides in order to identify the problem and help to find a solution that will bring about reconciliation. I believe wholeheartedly, **Proverbs 15:1**: "A soft answer turneth away wrath but grievous words stir up anger." (Full Life Study Bible p 944) My passive personality contributes to my natural instinct to avoid confrontations. I guess you can say I was born to be an advocate for peace. As a mixed raced child, I have learnt to focus on how our differences make us unique, rather than how they separate us. My upbringing has increased my sensitivity toward matters of equality among people. I am infuriated when crude racial remarks are made and always driven to provide a strong defense. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, I believe 'we must be the change we wish to see in the world'. (Schipul, 1)

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